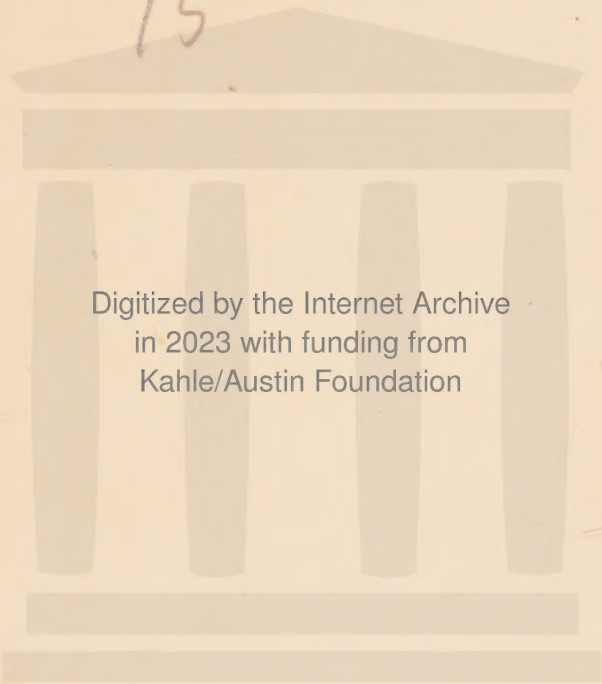
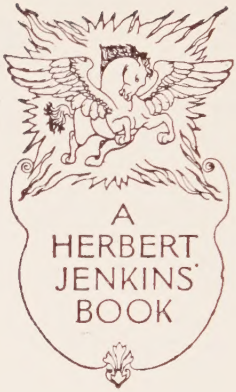
15



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

https://archive.org/details/meetthesepeople0000regi

MEET THESE PEOPLE



First printing . . . October 1928
Second printing . . November 1928
Third printing . . . December 1928
Revised and Enlarged Edition . . . . October 1930

Printed in Great Britain by Butler & Tanner Ltd., Frome and London

TO JACK HOBBS

Dear Jack, I seem to recollect,
Though you've forgotten, I expect,
I brought a boy to see you play
Down at the Oval, which is Lambeth way.
Alas, you were in rotten luck !
You scored a most unusual " duck."
And, later on, before the Stand
A tactless urchin, book in hand,
Bothered you for your autograph—
You took the pencil with a laugh,
And filled the heart of one small boy
With utter, undiluted joy. . . .

It was a charming thing to do,
And so, I give this book to you.

R. A.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
His Royal Highness	13
Best Sellers	15
The Man behind the Pipe	22
Super-Women	25
The Centre of the World	28
Too-Too-Tallulah	29
A Sporting Lord	31
An Old Savoyard	34
G. K. C.	36
Ladies of St. James's (Revised Version)	38
I like Edgar Wallace !	41
Looking for London's Latin Quarter	42
The Author Who Never Grew Up	45
A Political Paradox	48
Uncle George for Merrie England	51
"Lord" Lonsdale	52
Pirandello	53
The Metamorphosis of Mr. Arnold Bennett	55
Political Debits and Poetical Credits	57
The Super Talkie	59
"Juno and the Paycock"	61
The Inevitable Max	63
Art for Mart's Sake	65
Ah, to think of it !	69
Well, Well, Mr. Wells !	70
Of that Sir Alfred who did not burn his Boats	73
Fleet Street	74
To Lord Birkenhead	77

PAGE

GOOD OLD PERCE 79
A POSTER ARTIST 81
DAVID AND THE PHILISTINES . . . 82
THE STORY OF JANE AND JOHN . . 85
HELEN WILLS 87
H. W. AUSTIN 88
LEST WE FORGET TO REMEMBER . . 89
SUPER-REVUE 92
EVERYBODY'S DOING IT ! . . . 94
SIR WILLIAM ORPEN 97
THE PASSING OF A PUGILIST . . . 98
LINES TO A LITERARY LORD . . . 100
THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL . . . 103
A CRIME PLAY 104
TO A BILLIARD CHAMPION . . . 105
HILAIRE BELLOC 106
THOUGHTS FROM A BARGAIN BASEMENT . 109
BOBBY HOWES 111
EARL OF WESTMORLAND. 112
ALMOST—NOT QUITE 113
A COMEDIAN OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE . 115
A TROUBADOUR OF THE ACADEMIC SCHOOL 117
POOR MR. AGATE ! 118
LINES TO A ZIONIST 121
THE COCKTAIL 123
COMRADE OSWALD MOSLEY . . . 125
MR. ST. JOHN ERVINE BLAMES THE LADIES 126
THE PRETTY LADIES 127
THOSE SONS OF THAT SHEIK . . . 128
SIR JOHN LAVERY 131
SIR EDWARD ELGAR 132
" GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES " . . 133
ABE MITCHELL 135
ON A TREASURY OF LIVING POETS . . 137

CONTENTS

	PAGE
On a Book about Golf	140
Some Drawings by H. M. Bateman	143
After Reading "Seventy Years a Showman"	146
A Master of Art	149
A Master of Hounds	150
On Visiting the Old Bailey	152
A Peep behind the Scenes	154
To a Fashionable Preacher	156
The Puppets	158

LIST OF CARICATURES

	PAGE
H.R.H. The Prince of Wales *Frontispiece*	
Noel Coward	16
Rudyard Kipling	19
Michael Arlen	21
Lady Astor	24
Lord Lonsdale	32
Edgar Wallace	40
Sir James Barrie	46
George Lansbury	50
Arnold Bennett	54
Sean O'Casey	60
Jacob Epstein	66
Earl Beatty	68
Lord Melchett	72
Lord Birkenhead	76
Percy Fender	78
John Hassall	80
John Masefield	84
G. B. Shaw	90
Sir William Orpen	96
Sir Nigel Playfair	102
Gordon Selfridge	108
George Robey	114
Solly and Jack Joel	120
Sir Oswald Mosley	124
Sir John Lavery	130
Edith, Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell	136
Hilaire Belloc and G. K. Chesterton	138
H. M. Bateman	142
Augustus John	148

MEET THESE PEOPLE

MEET THESE PEOPLE

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

PRINCE ! do you often dream o' night
About the rot that papers write ?
That futile Twaddle-while-you-wait
I now attempt to illustrate !

You meet a friend upon your way,
The Prince of Wales remarked " Good-day ! "
You walk with him for half-a-mile,
The Prince of Wales was seen to smile !
Until, at last, you have to go,
The Prince of Wales said, " Cheerio ! "

You wander on to Leicester Square,
His Royal Highness takes the air !

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

You walk into the Hippodrome,
The Prince of Wales seemed quite at home!
You see an actress play a part,
How like his Grand-dad, bless his heart!

You take a taxi—if you can.
The Prince has grown to be a man!
You pass a friend and raise your hat,
Hail to our Royal democrat!
And when you go to bed at night—
The Prince of Wales puts out the light!

BEST SELLERS

At Wimbledon, some time ago,
They stood past champions in a row;
In order that the world might see
How splendid champions used to be—
How different from the ones that play
At Royal Wimbledon to-day.
And it has since occurred to me
How most instructive it would be
If we could marshal in a row
The authors of the Long Ago,
And try to ascertain how they
Compare with authors of to-day.

(1)

There was the lady who set down
The life of a cathedral town,
Each book had got a different name
But otherwise was just the same.
My mother, I have understood,
Read books by Mrs. Henry Wood.

"UNLESS IT BE NOEL COWARD'S PLAYS"

Because the latest tale she told
Was just exactly like the old.
The sort of thing, some people say,
That Gilbert Frankau does to-day!

(2)

When Robert Browning wrote the rhymes
That suited mid-Victorian times,
He struck a very subtle wheeze
That never since has failed to please.
Each latest masterpiece was planned
On lines that none could understand;
And not a reader could make out
What in the world 'twas all about.
Poor Robert Browning's dead and gone,
But still the Sitwells carry on!

(3)

Behold, we skip a dull decade,
And reach—you needn't be afraid—

The Naughty Nineties ! Goodness me,
How tame those Nineties seem to be.
For no one ever seems to look
At Aubrey Beardsley's " Yellow Book,"
And nothing so correct and mild
As Crackenthorpe or Oscar Wilde
Is ever published nowadays—
Unless it be Noel Coward's plays !

(4)

Next Rudyard Kipling came along.
He's still alive and going strong.
He told us tales of soldier men—
We hadn't all been soldiers then !
But now we know as much, or more,
As Rudyard Kipling did before.
We leave his volumes on our shelves
And tell those soldier tales ourselves.
But East is East and West is West,
And Kipling's tales are still the best.

" KIPLING'S TALES ARE STILL THE BEST "

(5)

Head of an ancient Scottish clan,
Disraeli was a writing man,
The sort of florid, foreign type
That turns out piles of polished tripe.
He wrote about the folk you meet
In Berkeley Square and Curzon Street;
And catered for that curious age
When Peers appeared on every page.
In fact, Disraeli was a snob,
And Michael Arlen's got his job!

"MICHAEL ARLEN'S GOT HIS JOB!"

THE MAN BEHIND THE PIPE

One politician always wears
An eye-glass in his eye.
I've often wondered why.
His father, as, of course, you know,
Wore that same eye-glass long ago ;
So is it, do you think,
Some strange myopic kink ?
And does a father's son inherit
His father's failing with his father's merit ?

Another politician smokes
An extra big cigar—
Too big for me by far.
Upon the tennis court and yacht
He smokes until his teeth are hot.
Now is it, do you think,
An effort to appear superior,
Or has he motives more ulterior ?

Another politician wears
A comic sort of hat.
Now why does he do that?
Of course, we know it has been said
That Fortune doth affect the head;
So can it be that he
May sometimes find his hat so small
He can't get into it at all?

But Stanley Baldwin's not like that.
He wears a common bowler hat.
He never smokes a big cigar
That is too big for him by far.
He wears no eye-glass in his eye,
He never makes us wonder why!
A plain and honest British type,
Of instinct sound and judgment ripe,
He smokes an ordinary pipe.

"SHE WOULD ROB US OF OUR BEER"

SUPER-WOMEN

(1)

Some talk about the Borgias,
And some talk of Sheba's Queen;
Some say that Gladys Cooper
Is the finest ever seen.
But of all the super-women
There is none so fine, I'm thinking,
As the noble Lady Member
Who would put an end to drinking.
Now *there's* a super-woman,
I am tempted to observe,
What Push, what Pertinacity,
What splendid Yankee nerve!
And what a sense of humour—
She would rob us of our beer,
And yet she lets her husband
Carry off the Oaks each year.
That's really rather funny
Though the logic isn't clear;
We may all of us go racing
But we mustn't drink our beer!

(2)

Some say if Mrs. Potiphar
Had lived in later days,
She would have been the super-vamp
Of super-picture plays.
But of all the super-women
None has brought our stage more honour
Than the really super-actress who
Appeared as the Madonna.
Now *there's* a super-woman,
Quite a Miracle, in fact;
She played the leading part although
She'd never learned to act.
And then there are those Bright Young Things
Who dash about at night,
Though some of them are not so young
And some are not so bright.
They started treasure hunting
On the Lido one fine night,
And "by the Yellow Tiber there
Was tumult and affright."

(3)

Some talk about Salome,
And some talk of Good Queen Bess;
Some say it was Godiva
Who invented modern dress.
But of all the super-women
There is surely none that's finer
Than the one who blazed the desert trail
From Golder's Green to China.
Now *there's* a super-woman
And her like we seek in vain,
She started off for Timbuctoo,
And nearly missed the train.
She hired a super-caravan
Determined to explore
The desert where no Englishman
Had ever been before.
Her super-caravan arrived
Upon that distant shore—
But Mr. Cook's Conducted Tour
Arrived the day before!

THE CENTRE OF THE WORLD

Piccadilly Circus is the Centre of the
World !
Where the idle people play,
Men are digging every day.
Digging deeper, deeper yet,
Till, one day, they hope to get
From Piccadilly Circus to the Centre of
the World.

Piccadilly Circus is the Centre of the
World !
In his own especial mart
Charlie Cochran peddles art.
Scheming dreams for our delight
In the Circus every night—
And that is why the Circus is the Centre
of the World.

TOO-TOO-TALLULAH

Tallulah ! You are all the rage
With simple souls who love the stage,
And even coastguards
Who live in distant Aberdeen
Assure me they have sometimes seen
Your picture postcards.

Your perfect features cheer the lives
Of bishops' and of busmen's wives
In Wales and Wapping ;
While all the maiden ladies say
That you, in every part you play,
Are simply topping.

You're sporting and you're full of " It,"
Your Sex Appeal stampedes the pit ;
You are so pretty
That even critics cheer and stamp
With your admirers from the Hamp-
Stead Garden City.

I love to jostle in the queue
With all those cardboard lovers who
  Think you so splendid,
They say that you are simply sweet ;
In fact, quite nice enough to eat !
  My tale is ended.

A SPORTING LORD

(1)

My Lord ! There is a story told,
How some iconoclast of old—
To get his picture in the paper—
Profanely snuffed a sacred taper !
Your plan, my lord, is better far :
You're always lighting—your cigar.

(2)

Not yours the legislator's lot ;
You hate such highfalutin rot.
You fly from Courts and cares of States
To your beloved welter-weights.
Your Empire stood in Leicester Square,
I know—I often met you there.

(3)

Survival of a sporting clan,
A man content to be—a man.

D 6

"SURVIVAL OF A SPORTING CLAN"

A SPORTING LORD

Of noble lords, the most bucolic,
Who ever started on a frolic;
You're so ecstatically skittish,
And yet magnificently British.

Epitaph

Here lies a jolly fellow, who
Did what he dam well wanted to.
His morals, bless his cheery soul,
He kept in fairly good control.
He loved to see his fellows fight,
And never went to bed at night!

AN OLD SAVOYARD

Have we forgotten
How the rafters rang,
When Charlie sang
Each night for our delight?
We, who are in his debt—
Have we forgotten yet?

To hearts that sing,
Wealth is a little thing:
Success turns sour
Within the hour,
And riches soon take wing.
But Love and Joy are hard to find,
And so, leave Gratitude behind.

Have we forgotten?
While night holds a dream,
We'll hear the golden stream
Of happy music flow.

And so
While his dear face
Within our memories still holds a place
We pay the debt we owe.
Have we forgotten ? No !

G. K. C.

God built him on a generous plan
Because He rather liked the man ;
And we, who know his worth, are quite
Convinced that God was in the right.

Now Gilbert stands for England,
And all that England means,
From meetings in the market-place
To bacon with his beans.
But, though you sing an English song
In patriotic tones,
You'll get the bird at Beaconsfield
Unless your name is Jones.

He wields a mighty flagon,
And makes a mighty vow
That England's victories were won
Down yonder at the "Plough."

But, though you own a brewery
In every county town,
He will not take a glass with you
Unless your name is Brown.

For Gilbert oft discloses,
As only Gilbert can,
His curious hate for noses
Worn by the sons of Moses,
He'd like them, one supposes,
Built on a different plan:
But what nobody knows, is
How first the feud began.

LADIES OF ST. JAMES'S

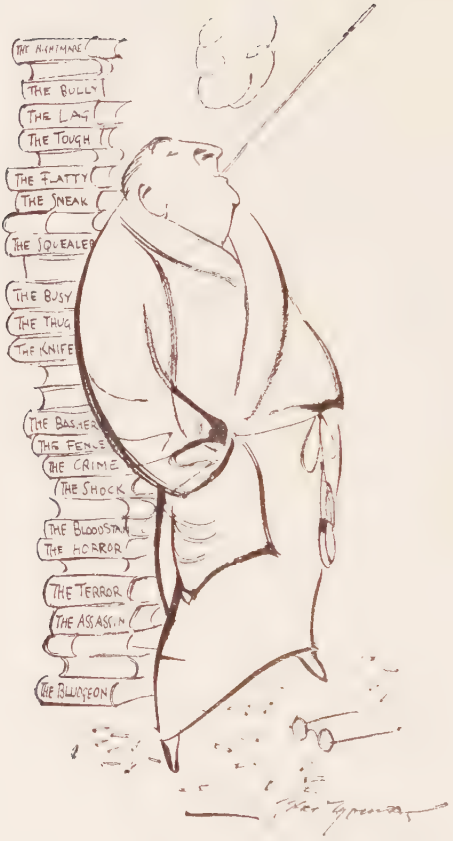
(*Revised Version*)

The Ladies of St. James's
Came swinging to the play;
They came to see Sir Gerald act;
The theatre, of course, was packed,
And lots were turned away.
They cheered and cheered and cheered and
cheered
When dear Sir Gerald first appeared.

The Ladies of St. James's—
The fairest in the land—
Indulged in philosophic doubt,
For what the play was all about
They didn't understand.
Wild anguish racked each faithful breast,
Sir Gerald's part was not the best.

The Ladies of St. James's
Go promptly up the pole,

Unless the author, from the start,
Agrees that dear Sir Gerald's part
Is greater than the whole ;
Strange how these misconceptions cling
The play for once is not the thing.



"IN SPITE OF HIS BOOKS!"

I LIKE EDGAR WALLACE!

I *like* Edgar Wallace!
His waistcoat is white;
He sits in his box
When he has a first night,
And when I shout "Speech!"
At the end of the play,
He always has something
Amusing to say.

I *like* Edgar Wallace,
The Kipling of Crime.
I buy him in batches
Of ten at a time.
I read all his stories
Of Squeakers and Crooks.
I *like* Edgar Wallace—
In spite of his books!

LOOKING FOR LONDON'S LATIN QUARTER

Bohemia! Bohemia!
Where lies that lovely land,
Where Love is Life and Life is Love,
And both go hand in hand?
Where Hope is ever at the helm;
Where skies are always blue;
And everybody knows, so well,
Their dreams will all come true!

I've heard men speak of this fabled land,
Where laughter and love go hand in hand;
Where Youth is whirled in the merry dance,
Grasping the skirts of Happy Chance,
Laughing and loving as youth will do—
Dreaming the dreams that *must* come true.
Tell me, where is that fabled land,
And where, oh, where, is that happy band?

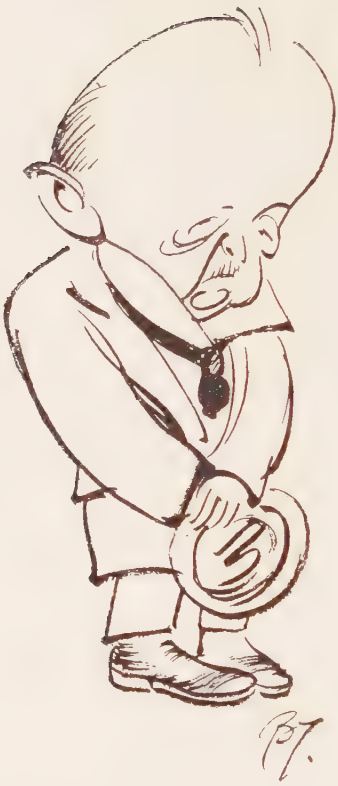
Lots of money is doubtless owed
In Berkeley Square and the Brompton Road,
But no Bohemians you will meet
From Onslow Gardens to Regent Street.
Then where, oh where, is the fabled spot
Where whiskers wave and collars are not?
Is it in Fleet Street, or the Strand?
Tell me, where is that fabled land?

What has become of that fabled land,
And where, oh where, is that happy band—
That band of brothers who quaffed and laughed;
Who lived their lives on an overdraft?
Painters, poets—a motley crew—
Those glad, mad spirits that once we knew.
How shall we find some guiding star
To lead us into that land afar
Where gay Bohemia's borders are?

Bohemia! Bohemia!
You hold uneasy ghosts
Of those who faced the starting gate
Nor reached the winning post:
Who dreamed among the lotus leaves
In that enchanted hour,
Yet woke to find their dreams were dust,
And all the grapes were sour!

THE AUTHOR WHO NEVER GREW UP

I NEVER pass his window, but
I make quite sure that it is shut,
Because I fear that any day
He'll spread his wings and fly away,
To join those happy girls and boys
Who always romp and make a noise ;
Who fall in ponds and wet their
clothes,
And kick their boots out at the toes.
Those jolly chaps who love to fight,
And dream of pirates half the night :
Who always long to rob a train,
And give the money back again.
Whose talk is all of humming-tops
And catapults and lollipops ;
Of strawberries and clotted cream
And ghastly crimes that make you dream ;
Of desert islands where one found
A single foot-print on the ground ;



"HE'LL SPREAD HIS WINGS AND FLY AWAY"

Of crocodiles and robber bands ;
Of men with hooks instead of hands ;
Of tomahawks and bleeding scalps ;
Of murders in the lonely Alps ;
Of cannibals athirst for gore,
And corpses rotting on the shore. . . .

° ° ° ° °

Sir James, I know a little shop,
Where *we* could buy a humming-top,
A cricket bat, a hockey stick,
And lots of tales of Deadwood Dick.

We might *just manage* cigarettes !
Sir James ! What say you ? Shall us ?
Let's !

A POLITICAL PARADOX

Dear Winston, you're a paradox,
Inscrutable and strange,
You've gambled nearly everywhere
But on the Stock Exchange.
Although you often lose your job,
You're never at a loss;
You are the sort of rolling stone
That always gathers moss.

A government department runs
In such a curious way,
That some there be who do the work,
While some get all the pay.
And why such curious things should be
I cannot quite make out,
Unless it is that Hidden Hand
We've heard so much about.

We don't hire undertaker's men
To write our funny jokes—

Or buy a coloured frontispiece
From wine and spirit blokes.
A man must serve—as Jacob served—
To make a wooden chair,
But you would build a battleship
And never turn a hair.

"DOWN AT THE SERPENTINE"

UNCLE GEORGE FOR MERRIE ENGLAND

When the Press are around,
And the weather is fine,
You will find him down
At the Serpentine :
Mutton-chop whiskers all complete,
Giving the boys and the girls a treat ;
Or telling the story of Margery Daw—
Who sold her bed and slept upon straw—
To the two little twins of his daughter-in-law.

"LORD" LONSDALE

When Freddy Lonsdale first began
To dramatise his fellow-man—
Finding, at once, it didn't pay
To put a potman in a play—
He took Burke's Peerage from the shelf
And started to improve himself.

To-day his social standards soar
A great deal higher than before;
The Duke of This—the Earl of That—
A coronet on every mat!
Don't think that Lonsdale is a snob:
It simply means he knows his job!

PIRANDELLO

A FUNNY fellow
Whose curious plays
Enjoyed a craze,
And ran for *days*!

"IT WAS SUCH REALISTIC STUFF"

THE METAMORPHOSIS OF MR. ARNOLD BENNETT

THERE are five towns in Staffordshire,
  As everybody knows ;
Not quite the sort of towns you get
In Sussex or in Somerset,
  Where apple-blossom blows.
The houses are not nicely thatched ;
No one of them is quite detached :
  They stand in horrid rows.

When Arnold Bennett first began
  To smite his blooming lyre,
He told how Mrs. Jobson's cat
Would sometimes sit upon the mat
  Beside the kitchen fire.
It was such realistic stuff
That we could never have enough
  Of smoky Staffordshire.

But since he went to gay Paree,
His tone is different quite,
Somehow, he never can forget
The wicked women he has met—
He must have kissed a midinette !
I hope the baggage didn't let
The rascal stop all night !

And that is why his later tales
Are having such colossal sales.

POLITICAL DEBITS AND POETICAL CREDITS

The plagiarists from Canada,
And from Australia too,
All sing the songs he used to sing ;
The reason that they do
Is pretty obviously known—
They've no ideas of their own.

You praised the plan of the single man
Who selfishly rode alone ;
And poked poor fun at the foolish one
Who sat by a warm hearth-stone.
Since that was penned, you have learned, old friend,
The wisdom of those who wive—
But the wrong that was done at twenty-one
You must pay for at sixty-five.

You made it a sin—and rubbed it in—
To labour unto the end,
A trifle rough, that cynical stuff;
And what of yourself, old friend?
The song you sang was a boomerang
And you will admit to-day,
The stuff you write hasn't got the bite
Of "Sussex" or "Mandalay."

But 'tis good to sit, when the lamps are lit,
With your wonderful "Soldiers Three,"
To dream in the gloom, or a quiet room,
Of travels from "Sea to Sea";
To take fond looks at those well-thumbed books
We haven't the heart to lend—
The work that was done at twenty-one
For love of the work, old friend.

THE SUPER TALKIE

He's not like ordinary men
Who like to listen now and then;
He's like that Brook of Tennys-on
He just talks on—and on—and on.

When this wild whirl of words is past
And he has gone aloft at last,
With Matthew, Mark and Luke and John
He'll just talk on—and on—and on.

SEAN O'CASEY

"JUNO AND THE PAYCOCK"

Oh, Paddy dear,
An' did ye hear
  The news that's goin' round
About this play,
This daarlin' play,
  The Irish Players found ?
Shure, 'tis the most disthressful story
  That ever yet was seen,
For there is wit
To savour it
  An' tears tucked in between.

When they went along to see it
  All the critics had to cheer,
An' the famous St. John Ervine
  Came and whispered in my ear :
" 'Tis the finest Irish drama
  That ever yet was seen.
Be sure you go
An' see the show." . . .
  An' so, of course, I've been !

Each single act
With smiles is packed—
  It's like ye never knew;
You'll find the way
These players play
  Makes all they say seem true.
Shure 'tis the most delightful actin'
  That ever yet was seen;
The sort of thing
That makes you sing
  "The Wearin' of the Green."

THE INEVITABLE MAX

(1)

Dear Max, I fancy that you are
Too clever to be popular.
'Tis so embarrassing of you
To take our homage as your due.
I'd have six separate heart attacks
If someone called *me* clever, Max !

(2)

In *Yet Again*, page fifty-eight,
Line twenty-three, I note you state,
That, being alien to our climes,
We bore you just a bit at times.
I fancy I'd be making tracks
If I were feeling that way, Max !

(3)

You take our literary gods,
And give them nasty little prods,

You ask if Ruby Ayres is clever,
And if Hall Caine will live for ever?
An author paying super-tax
Is bound to be a genius, Max.

(4)

A man who knows it all—and more,
Is certain to become a bore;
But I forgive you as I sit
And read your *Happy Hypocrite*.
One day you'll drop *your* mask of wax
And then we'll know you better, Max!

ART FOR MART'S SAKE

The Maker looked upon His work,
And found that it was good.
He also found it Beautiful,
Or so I've understood.
In fact, the world was going strong
Till Jacob Epstein came along.

Now, Beauty is a *bourgeois* thing,
And Joy an empty creed.
To sit and watch the setting sun
Is very wrong indeed.
How God must hide His head in shame
At sound of Jacob Epstein's name!

There is a field in Gloucestershire
Where grass is growing green;
The buttercups and daisies there
Are fit to grace a queen.
But Epstein wouldn't see beyond
The bull-frog croaking in the pond.

" JACOB EPSTEIN CAME ALONG "

There is a spot beneath the Down
  Wherein, by God's good grace,
The happy and contented find
  Their final resting-place.
There is a splendid gargoyle, too,
Just like the Rima Epstein drew.

Though Ugliness should be the theme
  Of every poet's song;
Though Epstein may be in the right,
  And prove his Maker wrong—
I'm glad he didn't interfere
When God first fashioned Gloucestershire.

THE BEATTY TILT

AH, TO THINK OF IT!

THINK of Oxford without a Don,
Sacha Guitry without Yvonne,
Stanley Baldwin without his pipe;
Think of onions without their tripe,
Master Asquith without his mother,
Osbert Sitwell without the other;
Think of Cochran without his drum,
Walter Hagen without his gum,
Edgar Wallace without a plot;
Think of Lipton without a yacht,
Harry Lauder without a kilt—
Or Beatty without the Beatty tilt.

WELL, WELL, MR. WELLS!

THERE is a book by Wells,
In which the author tells
About a man who left his wife
Because she led him such a life.
He set the house on fire,
And did his best to fry her.
He cut the matrimonial knot
And let the lady have it hot;
Then lived a peaceful life
With someone else's wife.

No wonder such a tale
Commands a ready sale!
Some writers wouldn't have the nerve
To treat such wives as they deserve:
But Mr. H. G. Wells
(No wonder that he sells!)
Wastes little time in splitting straws
When he has got a righteous cause.

No married man should miss
A story such as this,
Which tells a husband what to do,
And points a healthy moral too.

"HE'S A BRUNETTE"

OF THAT SIR ALFRED WHO DID NOT BURN HIS BOATS

I'm not very fond
Of Sir Alfred Mond,[1]
For he's a brunette
And I am a blond.

[1] Sorry, Lord Melchett!

FLEET STREET

Fleet Street ! The world of black and
white,
Where night is day and day is night ;
Where writers burn their midnight oil,
And tireless printers sweat and toil
Through days of strain and nights of stress
To feed the hungry printing press—
That mighty megaphone which tells
Of earthquakes and of wedding bells
In Timbuctoo and Tunbridge Wells.

Fleet Street ! Where all the buses run
From Ludgate Hill to Kensington ;
The home of critics who insist
That actors never would be missed ;
Abode of men of mighty brain,
Who paint the panorama plain
From pole to pole, and back again ;
Describing all the world's affairs,
Its joys, its sorrows, and its cares—
Even the hats that Winston wears !

Friends ! If you do not deem it wrong
To barter substance for a song ;
If your glad hearts leap up to meet
The stray romances of the street ;
If life and love mean more to you
Than money-bags can ever do,
Then we are fortunately met—
We who are here without regret
In this remote, romantic land
From Ludgate Circus to the Strand.
Where songs are sung and tales are told
And paving-stones are made of gold.

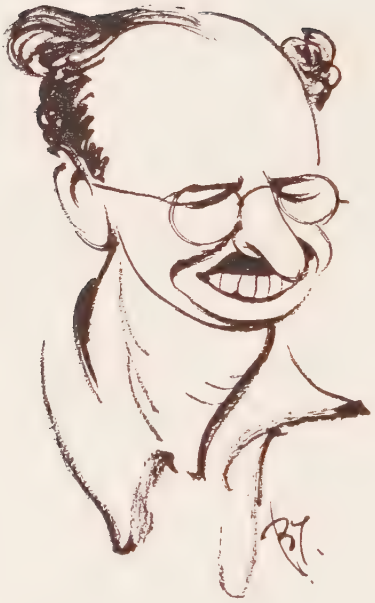
All do not rise on Fortune's tide ;
" The Street " has but one sunny side,
And on the brightest summer's day
The shadows lurk across the way.
Yet, do you know, I think sometimes,
As I sit scribbling rotten rhymes,
That we who wait in fear of duns
Are happier than the luckier ones.
And London Town might be less gay
If, on some wild November day,
All her top floors were blown away.

"LIFE'S A CORONA!"

TO LORD BIRKENHEAD

(Reproved for his vigorous debating in the House of Lords)

My noble lord, I'd be the last to grieve you—
What lark could pipe to guys so dull and grey ?
But, if you please, one quiet hint I'll leave you :
As from to-day,
Be kind, my lord, and let who can be clever !
Life's a Corona and a dinner-bell.
Sleep with your peers—they are your peers, remember.
My lord—farewell !



MR. P. G. H. FENDER

GOOD OLD PERCE

Down at the Oval,
  Where Surrey play,
There's a gasometer
  Over the way.

Down at the Oval,
  All of us sit
Telling each other
  How Percy can hit.

Cheering, while Percy
  Is hitting the ball
Into the tea tent
  And over the wall.

Down at the Oval,
  We wait for The Day
When he clears that gasometer
  Over the way.

JOHN HASSALL, R.I.

The man who thought it worth his while
To make the walls of London smile.

DAVID AND THE PHILISTINES

When next we have a jolly war
And volunteers are shouted for,
To sally forth amid the cheers
Of stay-at-homes and profiteers ;
With splendid speed, I'll double out
And join the ranks of those who—shout !

I, too, will wag a fatted fin ;
I, too, will rake the shekels in ;
I, too, will get that O.B.E.
Because another fought for me ;
And, if I have sufficient luck,
I'll get a peerage for my pluck !

You stand upon my study mat,
And wonder what I'm driving at.
Listen ! The men who did their bit
Got precious little out of it,
While anyone who didn't fight
Was subsequently made a knight.

Nemesis flies on ready wings !
That was *your* way of doing things,
And, though we must be grateful for
The way you worked to win the war,
Surely 'tis only right that you
Should be unfairly treated too !

"WHEN MASEFIELD KNOWS—"

THE STORY OF JANE AND JOHN

My aunt, Jane Hersey, is religious ;
Her thirst for gospel is prodigious.
She knows the *Christian Year* by heart :
So well, in fact, that she can start
Reciting it in any part !

She is so good, she never looks
At anything but holy books ;
And so, she learned, with great delight,
When looking through my shelves last night,
That you, dear John, had seen the Light.

" Dear me ! " remarked my aunt, Jane Hersey,
Holding your *Everlasting Mercy*,
" Dear me ! How could I overlook
So excellent and pure a book ?
I'll read it in some quiet nook."

I wasn't present when Aunt Jane
Was introduced to one Saul Kane :
That very charming person, who
Once bit his father's hand right through,
And broke his mother's heart in two !

Nor when she read, beside the fire,
How Parson guzzled port with Squire :
" You take his hand and drink his wine,
And he's a hog, but you're a swine."
Aunt Hersey read it, line by line !

When Masefield knows that every curse
he
Put in his *Everlasting Mercy*
Has been the cause of so much pain
To my most excellent Aunt Jane,
Perhaps he'll write the book again !

HELEN WILLS

Said Mr. Gold to Mr. Flake—
(Dear reader, pray make no mistake,
I do not advertise a brand
Of cigarettes. You understand,
Unless they pay, I cannot bring
Myself to do that sort of thing)—
Said Mr. Gold to Mr. Flake :
"Why do the Yanks all records break"?
Said Mr. Flake : "The fact is known.
They have a Wills, sir, of their own."

H. W. AUSTIN

As kippers are to caviare,
  As golf clubs are to gamps ;
As orchids are to buttercups,
  As pounds to penny stamps.
As castles are to cottages,
  As salmon are to trout ;
As Admiral to midshipman,
  As Tote to bookie's tout.
As Claridge's to coffee-stall,
  Champagne to cowslip wine,
As Colonel is to corporal—
  Your tennis is to mine.

LEST W'E FORGET TO REMEMBER

Some years ago I had a friend
  Recruited in the Strand,
Though what the shout was all about
  He didn't understand.
But still, he did his level best,
And humped his rifle with the rest.

He mucked about in mud and rain,
  And learned to carry on.
He sang a lot of tommy-rot,
  And wished he hadn't gone.
At last, they put him in a train—
He never saw his home again.

He read an article of yours,
  And wrote me in this wise :
" Shaw's *Common Sense* is quite immense ;
  I liked it—damn his eyes !
He may be right, but all the same,
Why can't the blighter play the game ? "

"HE READ AN ARTICLE OF YOURS"

He died for England—right or wrong—
  But ere the bullet hit
He said your stuff was true enough—
  And hated you for it.
That's all ! I do not think I can
Improve upon that soldier-man.

SUPER-REVUE

Bang upon the cymbals !
Beat upon the drum !
Shout it in the market-place
Of Little Biddlecombe.
Never mind the melody ;
Never mind the wit.
" Toodle-Oo " the new revue
Is absolutely IT !

I've heard it rumoured, once or twice,
That, when they have agreed the price,
They'll take a lease of Paradise.

Thereafter, anyone who dies
Will join the jolly queue, and rise
By Jacob's joy-plank to the skies ;

In that event, I understand,
They'll start a beauty chorus, and
Put lots of brass into the band.

Bang upon the cymbals !
Beat upon the drum !
If you make sufficient noise
Everyone will come.
Rattle up the castanets !
Shake the tambourines !
Any stuff is good enough
In forty-seven scenes !

EVERYBODY'S DOING IT!

God gave all men all earth to praise
  There's not the slightest doubt;
And yet, 'tis Sussex-by-the-Sea
  They always write about.
Why Kipling went to Rottingdean,
Instead of Banff or Aberdeen,
  I never could make out.

'Tis true that Mr. Belloc walked
  The wondrous Path to Rome:
He walked and walked; he talked and talked;
  He saw St. Peter's dome,
And yet, it was the Sussex Downs
And all those jolly Sussex towns
  That brought the wanderer home.

A score of poets followed fast,
  And yet another score,

Till poor old Sussex-by-the-Sea
  Could find no room for more.
They stretched from Arundel to Rye,
And all those lands that are thereby,
  Like sands upon the shore.

Yet there is peace at Bodiam,
  That castle of renown!
The lilies float upon the moat
  Beneath its walls of brown.
Here one may dream and dream again,
When little men have caught the train
  And scuttled back to town.

SIR WILLIAM ORPEN

His were the nudes
That launched a thousand feuds.

THE PASSING OF A PUGILIST

Some folk seem quite unfitted for
The job they have to do ;
There's Mr. Austen Chamberlain,
And Winston Churchill too !
Delightful men, without a doubt,
But nothing to write home about.

There's Mr. G. K. Chesterton,
Who should have kept an inn ;
There is Lord Darling, cheery soul,
Who made the lawyers grin.
Their clients died if they did not—
And there was Mr. Philip Scott !

Poor Mr. Scott was beautiful,
And had a jolly smile ;
The nicest thing in pugilists
We'd had for quite a while ;
But, when it came to playing rough,
He didn't hit 'em hard enough.

THE PASSING OF A PUGILIST

The fighting men of Ancient Rome,
Were never very nice,
Because they got no second chance
(You can't be eaten twice !)
And niceness, nowadays, old thing,
Is not an asset in the Ring.

LINES TO A LITERARY LORD

At Claridge's, I sometimes see
That curious anomaly
(Victim of fate's capricious prank)
A peer with money in the bank;
Who wears some brains beneath his hat—
Birth, Brains and Bullion! Think of that!

We know that in the Good Old Times
A common jester wrote the rhymes;
Yet, in these democratic days,
A baronet may wear the bays;
And though such instances are few,
A Peer may be a Poet too.

Contrariwise, we sometimes see,
In this enlightened century
(When Mayors and men of common clay
Are getting knighthoods every day),
That even literary men
Are given a title now and then.

LINES TO A LITERARY LORD

Your Lordship! I have tried to read
Your latest book—I have, indeed.
And though I cannot quite make out
What in the world 'tis all about,
I feel that you're a decent chap,
Labouring beneath Wealth's handicap.

"NIGEL IS KNIGHTED"

THE FORTUNES OF NIGEL

See how the Fates
Their gifts allot :
Nigel is knighted,
Gay is not.
Yet Nigel's knighthood,
I should say,
Was fairly earned
By Mr. Gay. . . .
For, after all,
He wrote the play !

A CRIME PLAY

I've never murdered anyone
Because I don't know how it's done;
But if I should, at any time,
Indulge in homicidal crime—
Before I start to give him beans—
I'll take my victim to the Queen's.

And I will say: "You will object
To being murdered, I expect;
But, on reflection, you will find—
If you have got an open mind—
That your demise will please the stalls
And, later on, the music halls.

"The proper aftermath of Crime
Is giving folk a jolly time;
So I intend to do you in
With all the pageantry of sin;
And then produce, in several scenes,
The end that justifies the means—
Another thriller at the Queen's."

TO A BILLIARD CHAMPION

Money is made in the weirdest of ways ;
Any profession is pure, if it pays.
Some get rich honestly—some in the Law—
Your way beats anything I ever saw.
Tell me, dear champion, don't you get sick
Of prodding a little white ball with a stick ?

Each one is happy enough, I suppose,
Tipping a winner or punching a nose ;
Being a popular pantomime dame,
Or drawing the ducats by playing a game.
Earning applause at a penny a kick,
Or prodding a little white ball with a stick.

Cheerio ! Lay on your magical wood !
I should make cannons all day if I could.
This is mere jealousy—if I were clever
I should play billiards for ever and ever.
Doubtless we're both of us equally sick—
I, of your billiards—You, of my Blick.

HILAIRE BELLOC

High in the hills above my home,
There was a road which led to Rome;
Or so, at least, the rumour ran
Though I have never met a man
Adventuring on that grassy track,
Who really walked to Rome and back.

Upon the map this road of mine
Was nothing but a dotted line.
No milestone marked its lonely way
And so, of course, I couldn't say
Whether the legions marched from Rome
Into the hills about my home.

The only thing that I could do
Was just to sit and wait for you
(Who tramped the miles to Peter's dome,
And so must know the path to Rome)
To lead me down the Pilgrim's Way
Into the mists of Yesterday.

Alas ! those jolly days have gone ;
Fled are our dreams of Babylon.
Romance moves slowly from the stage
Into the wings of Middle Age ;
And people do not walk to Rome
When they have bills to pay at home.

"HE PULLED THEM DOWN AND RAISED A STORE"

THOUGHTS FROM A BARGAIN BASEMENT

I SOMETIMES stand beside his store
And struggle to be grateful for
The benefits he has imparted
Since his great enterprise was started :
Since first he came to London Town
And started pulling houses down.

Those little houses prim and neat,
That used to stand in Oxford Street ;
Queer little shops with windy stairs,
And frankly mediæval wares,
Which simple shopmen would display
In quite a mediæval way.

Those funny little shops have gone,
Because they could not carry on.
He pulled them down and raised a Store
A great deal bigger than before ;

And countless thousands, since he came,
Have learned to bless his honoured name.

Beside the finest store in town,
The multitudes pace up and down ;
And, in the happy crowds, I see
Uneasy ghosts that smile at me,
Because they know I sympathise
With every little shop that dies.

BOBBY HOWES

If you can hold your own in a production,
And be a Star in something more than name ;
If you can keep your head when stalls are cheering
And gallery girls are calling you by name——

If you can estimate the true proportion
Of all those sounding triumphs you achieve ;
If you can go on living in the limelight
And realise 'tis only make-believe——

If you can smile in comical derision
At all the victories that you have won ;
Yours is the final glamour and the glory——
In fact, you'll do what Bobby Howes has done.

EARL OF WESTMORLAND

Whenever I go
To Gosforth Park,
Or Kempton Park,
Or Sandown Park,
Or any old Park;
With card in hand
I see him stand
This jolly young Earl of Westmorland.

ALMOST—NOT QUITE

She was an actress,
Bless her heart!
She nearly played a part;
Almost—not quite.

That dreadful night,
At the Palladriome,
When Binnie Hale,
Breaking a finger-nail,
Was forced to stay at home;
Almost—not quite.

And now,
In this queer Book of Life,
She's turned another page.
She's left the stage
To be young Hooffmann's wife.
Almost—not quite.

" AND ALL FOR SINGING SILLY SONGS ! "

A COMEDIAN OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

The other day I met a bore,
Who said it was a shame
That Robey should be earning more
Than Winston What's-his-name.
"And all for singing silly songs!
Now can you tell me why?"
"I'll tell you what it is, old man,"
I said to him, said I:

"When you can stand upon a stage
And learn the simple knack
Of selling something many times
To folk who give it back!
When you can raise a thousand pounds
By winking of an eye—
You'll earn what Mr. Robey gets!"
I said to him, said I.

And then I met another bore—
A gallant O.B.E.,
Who made his money in the war
By overcharging me.
He said it nearly made him swoon
When Orders *he* must buy,
Were granted to a hired buffoon.
And so I said, said I :

" If you had gone where soldiers go,
When they come out of hell ;
With lots of funny songs to sing
And funny tales to tell ;
If you had made those fellows laugh
Until you made them cry,
You'd get what Mr. Robey earned ! "
I said to him, said I.

A TROUBADOUR OF THE ACADEMIC SCHOOL

No ragged rhymester takes the ring;
We've finished with that sort of thing.
You wear a decent coat and vest,
Your slacks are always nicely pressed.
You smoke *Coronas*, I should say,
And have a new one every day.

Your wit is of that simple brand,
Which even I can understand.
Your verse is always most correct,
That's why it bores us, I expect;
And, though they don't know what you mean,
They love your Greek—in Golder's Green.

POOR MR. AGATE!

Mr. Agate, for his crimes
(Also for the *Sunday Times*)
Has to go and see a play
Almost every other day.

Mr. Agate doesn't dine,
Cannot have a glass of wine—
First Nights always start at eight,
And a critic's never late.

Mr. Agate has to sit
In the purlieus of the pit—
All the stalls from A to J
Hold the backers of the play.

Late arrivals in his row
Tread on Mr. Agate's toe;
If he happens to complain,
They just tread on him again.

POOR MR. AGATE!

Mr. Agate can't make out
What the play is all about—
Elocution, as you know,
Died some thirty years ago.

When the interval arrives
All the husbands leave their wives,
Treading firmly, as they go,
On poor Mr. Agate's toe.

Mr. Agate notes each fact
Of the dreary second act.
And those final, frenzied bawls
Of the backers in the stalls.

Deafened by each raucous shout,
Mr. Agate staggers out;
Tripping, in his wild retreat,
On some noisy backer's feet.

Mr. Agate, you'll agree,
Earns our heartfelt sympathy;
So we will forgive his crimes
Published in the *Sunday Times*.

"SOLLY AND HIS BROTHER JACK"

LINES TO A ZIONIST

When certain friends of yours and mine
  Return at length to Palestine ;
The country which, I understand,
Has now become your promised land,
I wonder : shall we like the change,
Or will it seem a trifle strange ?

Try to imagine, if you can,
  The feelings of that working man
Who, when his weekly wage is spent,
Has nothing left to pay the rent ;
And cannot liquidate the debt
By pawning baby's bassinet.

Your splendid scheme of emigration
  Would cause the greatest consternation,
If Solly and his brother Jack
Should go away, and not come back—
If you should lure from London Town
The brightest Joels of her crown.

You ply your propagandist pen
To rob us of our famous men
(Both Alfred Mond [1] and J. L. Sacks
May very soon be making tracks !),
You won't be happy till you get
Our very last Plantagenet.

[1] Sorry, Lord Melchett !

THE COCKTAIL

A Cocktail is a wicked thing,
Because it makes you want to sing.
It makes unlucky folk forget
Good fortune that they didn't get.
It makes the tales that you are told
Seem twice as funny as of old.
It makes the dullard you detest
Seem rather better than the best.
It makes those non-committal eyes
Brood with an eloquent surmise.
And thoughts are pearls upon a string—
A Cocktail is a wicked thing!

"A SIMPLE SON OF TOIL"

COMRADE OSWALD MOSLEY

What's in a name ?
Why, bless my heart,
Though you're a Bart.,
You're still the same
Child of the Soil !
A simple son of toil,
With money in the bank.
Sneering at rank ;
Wiping the sweat
From your exalted brow.
Righting the wrongs, bow-wow,
Of your less lucky friends,
Who earn the dividends
Of titled democrats.
Did I say " Rats " ?

MR. ST. JOHN ERVINE BLAMES THE LADIES

THE time has come, the critic cried,
To talk of modern plays ;
To deprecate the rubbish which
Is written nowadays.
Why do they write this sort of tripe ?
MYSELF : Because it pays !

These modern girls, the critic cried,
Should hide their heads in shame.
They crowd to see this sordid stuff,
And they are most to blame.
Now when they get to middle-age—
MYSELF : They're much the same !

So I suggest, the critic cried,
A regulation new :
No girl may go to see a play
Until she's forty-two.
When women get to such an age—
MYSELF : They never do !

THE PRETTY LADIES

Past the Pavilion—
One of the Seven Million—
I wandered,
And pondered :
" Where do the Pretty Ladies go ? "

Is there some special hell
For those who lived
And laughed
And loved
Too well ?

Or some especial Heaven
Where they may spend,
World without end,
One lovely, long, eternal summer's day ?
I couldn't say.

THOSE SONS OF THAT SHEIK

Suppose, I only say suppose,
You're sick of City Life ;
You want to leave the Suburbs,
And you want to leave your wife,
You want to find a public house
That doesn't close at ten ;
You want to seek some Open Space
Where Men are really Men.

Suppose you want to be a Sheik ;
To breathe the desert air ;
To sit upon a camel, as
You do upon a chair ;
To spur your fiery Arab steed
Across the desert wide ;
To pitch your moving tent, and drag
The heroine inside.

Well, here's your opportunity !
Your guide is close at hand,

You've only got to read this book
To smell the desert sand.
Before you've read a dozen lines
Your temperature will rise,
And you will find that you have got
Those glittering gimlet eyes.

You'll find that you can do the things
That He-Men always do.
You'll find you've got those gimlet eyes
That bore you through and through.
And when you've thrown this stupid book
Upon your topmost shelf—
I fancy you will find you've been
A trifle bored yourself.

"TO BE AN ARTIST I ASPIRED!"

SIR JOHN LAVERY

(Who has painted 21 American Millionaires)

WHEN we were very, very young
(As Mr. A. A. Milne has sung)
We used to sit about and say
What things we'd do another day.
Some wanted to be pirate kings,
Owners of roundabouts and swings
And lots of other jolly things.

But I ! Alone and far apart
I sat, and set my youthful heart
Upon the glittering gauds of Art.
To be an Artist I aspired !
To paint ! My very soul was fired ;
And when I failed I could have cried ;
I could have sat me down and died.

But since I've peeped behind the scenes
And know what painting really means ;
Although no laurels grace my brow—
I do not feel so sorry now !

SIR EDWARD ELGAR

(Who says England is not a musical nation)

Sir Edward, this is very wrong—
After the way we've sung your song.
After we've hymned, in every key,
Our England, Mother of the Free.
After we've sung it every night,
Until we've nearly got it right :
Each morning and each afternoon,
Until we nearly know the tune ;
Till Mrs. Goode, of Golder's Green,
Hearing me singing it at Sheen,
Has got your song upon the brain—
Come, come, Sir Edward, guess again !

"GENTLEMEN PREFER BLONDES"

The title of this book
  Which all the world was reading,
I fancy you will find
  Is really most misleading.
It isn't fair;
It isn't wise;
It isn't safe,
  To generalise!

Such theories invite
  Immediate objections.
Why should the shy brunette
  Thus forfeit our affections?
Preferring blondes
Can scarcely be
A test of true
Gentility.

One gentleman I know
  Discovered, to his sorrow,

The shy brunette to-day
  May be a blonde to-morrow.
The simple truth
Can't be gainsaid :
Brunettes are born
And blondes are made !

The author of this book
  Forecasts a healthy leaven
Of sad, synthetic blondes
  Within a henna'd Heaven.
She holds the reader
In the vice
Of her peroxide
Paradise.

Nature has showered her gold
  In *mimosa* and wattle ;
But you can buy a blonde
  At four-and-six a bottle.
How awful if
Sir Alfred Mond [1]
Made up his mind
To be a blonde !

[1] Sorry, Lord Melchett !

ABE MITCHELL

(Who has " stumbled on a secret of the game ")

New secrets each succeeding day
Hover around us as we play,
How can I hope to learn them all?
I keep my eye upon the ball;
I make the club-head follow through
Exactly as you told me to.
I take my mashie in the rough
And hit the ball just hard enough,
Yet not too hard—I reach the green
In something over seventeen;
I stand, serene and undismayed
By stymies, well and truly laid,
And now, just when my task is done,
You go and guess another one!

"THERE ARE THE SITWELLS—"

ON A TREASURY OF LIVING POETS

Poets are funny things!
One poet sings
Of how his lady has proved more than kind,
In fact, he indiscreetly lifts the blind
Upon the bedroom of his soul,
And, from the open window, he looks down
Shouting his indiscretions to the town;
While we who stand without,
Wonder what all the bother is about.

Another poet sings
A song of hopeless passion,
In quite a pleasant fashion;
And, as we place his volume on the shelf,
We wipe an eye,
And wonder why
He didn't keep his trouble to himself.

" BELLOC AND CHESTERTON "

There are the Sitwells—
Edith, Osbert and Sacheverell—
Each one a poet,
And don't they let you know it!
Listen to this—
It's much too good to miss:
"In the drawing-room,
The fireplace is set
With green tiles
Of an acanthus pattern."
Damned good!

Belloc and Chesterton
Are much more fun.
If England were a piece of bread and
cheese
Set in a sea of ale,
Such men as these
Would be imperialists.
They'd bang their fists,
And foreigners would quail.
If England were a pewter pot—
But she is not!

ON A BOOK ABOUT GOLF

This game of golf,
Which rhymes with cough
And not with rough,
Is easy stuff.

You put your ball
Upon a thing
They call a tee.
You take a swing,
And hit as far
As you can see.

You walk a hundred yards or so ;
You give the ball a second blow,
And, shortly after, it is seen
Upon a thing they call a green.

The hole is near,
The way is clear ;
You sink the ball—
And that is all.

ON A BOOK ABOUT GOLF

And what I cannot quite make out
Is what they write these books about.

I've played this game of golf,
I've stood upon the tee
With thousands there to see ;
And did I worry ?
I set my teeth
And knocked half Walton Heath
Into Mid-Surrey.

Another day
I wandered Weybridge way.
St. George's Hill
Is standing, still ;
But slightly shaken
Unless I'm much mistaken.

I haven't read
This book by Joyce and Roger Wethered ;
I do not need it.
I know the game,
But, all the same,
You'd better read it !

"H. M. BATEMAN SEEMS TO LIKE THEM LESS"

SOME DRAWINGS BY H. M. BATEMAN

HERE's a book,
I like its look,
All about Colonels—
And, to me, a Colonel
Is a thing infernal.
Colonels !
I've suffered from the blighters in the Mess.
They've even dared to criticise my dress !
They've said rude things to me upon parade—
Found me, and left me, damnably afraid.

Colonels !
This isn't fun.
I'm seeing red.
I hate 'em, all but one,
And he is dead.

They've stood behind me on the barrack square
And talked about the way I cut my hair.
They've watched me try to drill an awkward squad
And walked away, muttering a faint : "My God !"

Colonels !
Do you know ?
If I saw sixty Colonels in a row,
Each separate Colonel in a separate fit,
I really shouldn't mind one single bit.

Colonels !
If some of you
Have suffered, too,
Then buy this book that H. M. Bateman drew ;
And see, within its wild hilarious pages,
Colonels in seven-and-forty different rages.

Cursing at golf,
Because the ball will *not* come off
The tee.
Cursing like anything—at nothing !
Cursing both high and low,
Just as they cursed at me
Twelve years ago. . . .

I don't like Colonels, but I must confess
That H. M. Bateman seems to like them
less.

AFTER READING "SEVENTY YEARS A SHOWMAN"

In spacious days
When you and I were young;
When Osbert Sitwell's songs
Were still unsung.
When Eddie Marsh and Coward
Hadn't met;
When Ivor's classic profile
Hadn't set.
In spacious days
When showmen knew their job;
When you could see
Six murderers—
A white-washed elephant—
A living skeleton
And a bearded lady
For a bob!
When country folk
Went flocking to the fair;

And village maids
Put ribbons in their hair.
When frenzied porkers,
Greased from head to tail,
Were chased by men and boys
In White Horse Vale—
Those were the days
When Lord George Sanger strode,
A real colossus,
Down each country road ;
While, in his wake,
The gaping rustics ran,
Scenting the secrets
Of each caravan.
He was a Showman,
And he knew his job :
Six murderers—
A white-washed elephant—
A living skeleton
And a bearded lady
For a bob !

AUGUSTUS JOHN

Augustus John
  You gaze upon—
A master of Art
  Who looks the part.

A MASTER OF HOUNDS

Curse the motors ; Curse the frost.
Curse the wall where you got tossed.
Now then, gentlemen, don't be shocked.
Curse the gate that is always locked.
Curse the fool who stopped the Earth.
Curse the wire for all you're worth—
It put your nose in plaster—
But none of you—not one of you—
Can curse like the Master.

We know Dick Turpin rode to York
And Gilpin rode to Ware.
While Jehu he
Drove furiously
In a chariot and a pair.
A man who throws a leg on a horse
Is bound to do and dare,
But none of the riders rode to hounds
And heard the Master swear.

We know the Tower of Babel was
A wonderful affair.
It got so high
It reached to the sky,
'Twas a turret beyond compare.
The builders then began to converse
In language rich and rare,
But none of the builders rode to hounds
And heard the Master swear.

* * * * *

To you who make your Master curse
I dedicate this simple verse.
In the belief that all of you,
Now I have had a word with you—
Will ride to hounds without disgrace;
Will meet your Master face to face,
Knowing he will not term your steed
"A sanguinary centipede!"

ON VISITING THE OLD BAILEY

I went there once ;
Spent one " dramatic day "
At the Old Bailey
Which is Ludgate way.
I knew an Usher,
So, I seized the chance
To see a criminal
Condemned with Pomp and Circumstance.
With other idle people
At the back
I saw a human soul
Upon the rack.
I heard the learned Counsel
For the Crown—
A pleasant gentleman
In wig and gown—
Talk for a solid hour
And then sit down.
I heard a second Counsel
Tell anew

ON VISITING THE OLD BAILEY

The sordid story
Everybody knew.
I saw the dock,
I saw the man inside,
I saw the mother of the girl
Who died.
I saw the jury
And the prisoner share
Increasing boredom
With the whole affair.
All bored!
As bored as I had often been
By some stale, futile, undramatic scene—
Until, at last,
I almost seemed to sit
Yawning my head off
In some West End pit;
Saying: "Why can't they hang him
And have done with it?"
And yet I stayed
(The Usher was my friend):
To see the drama played
Right to its bitter end!

A PEEP BEHIND THE SCENES

His Lordship looked a trifle pale.
Said he : " What can we do to-day
To make the British public say,
' There's nothing like the *Mail* ' ? "
He called his bright young men around,
And said : " Some subject must be found
To stimulate our sale ! "

The bright young men sat in a row.
The youngest one, I understand,
Held tightly to his lordship's hand
And wouldn't let it go.
He wrinkled up his baby brow,
The same as I am doing now,
Did Master So-and-So.

His smart young brain was getting hot.
(It isn't fair to ask a man
To be as clever as he can.)

But still, he said a lot
Of earnest things that Friday night,
And some of them were very bright,
And some of them were not.

The upshot of the interview
I really do not recollect,
But it was clever, I expect;
Perhaps a trifle new!
It made us talk about the *Mail*,
And probably increased the sale,
As it was meant to do!

TO A FASHIONABLE PREACHER

Most reverend and most tactful ! You
discovered long ago
That What's-his-name is tickled by abuse
of So-and-so ;
While So-and-So will not dismiss your
rhetoric as tame
If you give due attention to the sins of
What's-his-name.

I love to hear you thundering, in horror-
stricken tones,
About the moral turpitude of Lady Vere
de Jones ;
While Lady Jones's corsets creak with
quite unchristian glee,
Because, poor soul, she fancies you are
getting cross with me.

The pink and purple patches of a second-
rate revue,

And Mrs. Gossip, of the *Sketch*, are tame
compared to you.
We gather round on Sundays, and you
talk to us of sin.
We love to hear you tell us off, and so
you rub it in.

Somehow, I can't help thinking, when I
join your happy throng,
Of Dolly Dachet's drawing-room, with
scandal going strong.
Better than browsing on the Backs, or
golfing on the greens,
A pleasant Sunday afternoon with you
to give us beans.

THE PUPPETS

"The Fashion in war books is passing"
—Daily Paper

We were the Puppets—we, the men who
died.
We paid the piper, and you called the
tune.
We were the play you saw last Christ-
mastide;
The book you read that summer's
afternoon.

We were the Puppets—we, the men you
knew;
Replaced once more upon our several
racks,
Dragged from our dreams, and crucified
anew
To earn some lucky author's super-tax.

They told you how we drank, and loved
and lied :
Our vices swelled the royalties they
earned,
And when you wearied of the men who
died,
Our feet of clay unto the clay returned.

We were the Puppets—father, brother,
friend ;
Warriors unknown, our lot to bear the
brunt ;
But once again we reach our Journey's
End,
And All is Quiet on our Western Front.